

James M. Davy Named DHS Commissioner

GOVERNOR JAMES E. MCGREEVEY has named James M. Davy, Chief of Management and Operations in the Office of the Governor, to be the next Commissioner of the Department of Human Services.

Davy, who must still be confirmed by the state Senate, will succeed Gwendolyn L. Harris. Harris is leaving in February to become Director of the New Jersey Urban Development Project at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. He is expected to start in mid-February, when Commissioner Harris will leave for her new position at Rutgers.

Davy, 50, has held his current position in the Governor's office since the start of the McGreevey Administration. There, he has been responsible for

managing and coordinating Cabinet and State government operations and was instrumental in developing the Administration's policy agenda. He has played a key role in virtually every major initiative of the McGreevey administration.



James M. Davy

In announcing the appointment, the Governor said that throughout his career, Davy has "consistently demonstrated an exceptional ability to manage government with great professionalism and compassion, to make tough decisions and to produce results that benefit the people we serve. The challenges he will confront at the Department of Human Services are formidable, but he is well-equipped to meet them."

Commissioner Harris said she was pleased with the Governor's choice for the new Commissioner and that she wished him well.

"I've worked closely with Jim Davy for the last two years and I've come to know him as an intelligent, capable person who cares about the people served by this department," she said. "I'm sure he will meet the challenge of transforming the child welfare system and protecting services for New

Jersey's vulnerable and needy people in these difficult financial times."

Prior to joining State government, Davy served for ten years as Business Administrator in Woodbridge Township. He held similar positions in South Brunswick, Hopewell and West Milford. During 2001, he was Chief of Operations for the

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"McGreevey for Governor Campaign", and later he directed the Governor's Transition Team.

A past president of the New Jersey Municipal Management Association, Davy also was the Chairman of the Governmental Affairs and Public Policy Committee for the International City Management Association. He served on several committees for the New Jersey State League of Municipalities between 1978 and 2001.

Davy earned his master's degree in Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University and his undergraduate degree at Thiel College in Greenville, Pa.. He lives in Pennington with his wife, Lucille, and their two sons.

Hunger Relief Funding Announced

The Department of Human Services (DHS) will grant a total of \$1.5 million to New Jersey's six regional food banks this winter to help serve the

growing numbers of residents who need emergency food.

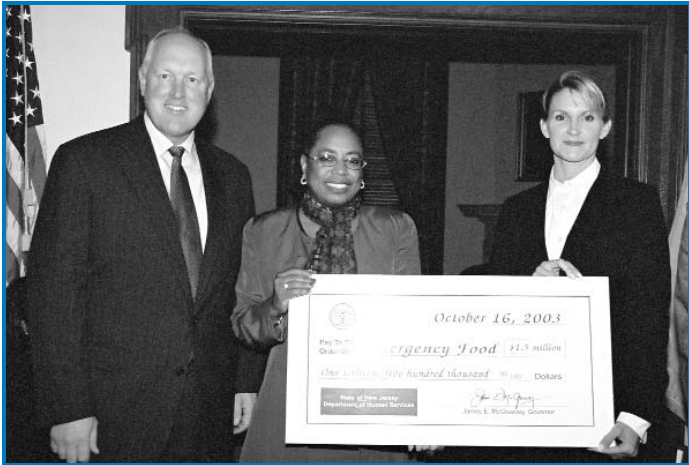
The funding was recommended by the Hunger Prevention Advisory Committee, a panel appointed by Gov. James E. McGreevey to advise DHS and oversee a needs assessment of the state's emergency food programs.

"We are helping our food banks put warm meals in front of those who need them most this winter," said Gov. McGreevey. "Our administration is committed to ensuring the health and well-being of our most vulnerable citizens, who need food and proper nutrition."

DHS Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris announced the \$1.5 million in funding on October 23 - World Food Day - during a press conference called by a coalition of anti-hunger advocates.

The advocates held the conference to release the "Blueprint to End Hunger in New Jersey," a report recommending various federal and state government

actions to increase funding and availability of hunger assistance programs. Gov. McGreevey has pledged to consider the state initiatives recommended in the report.



Charles M. Kuperus, Secretary, NJ Department of Agriculture; Gwendolyn L. Harris, Commissioner, NJ Department of Human Services; Adele LaTourette, Director, Statewide Emergency Food and Anti-Hunger Network.

Six food banks will share the \$1.5 million. They are: Community Foodbank of New Jersey; Community Foodbank - Southern Branch; Food Bank of South Jersey; Foodbank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties; Mercer Street Friends Food Cooperative; and the NORWESCAP Foodbank.

The food banks supply soup kitchens, food pantries and feeding programs in their respective regions.

Commissioner Harris said the funding is critically needed to help those local programs serve a growing number of people in need.

"People are hurting in this economy, and this is something we can do right now to ease the pain," Commissioner Harris said.

The food bank funding was provided under the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Act of 2001, which appropriated \$5 million to benefit anti-hunger and nutrition programs and to fund a needs assessment of the state's emergency food network.

With the \$1.5 million being released to the food banks, about \$2.5 million of the original appropriation has been spent.

That leaves another \$2.5 million to be distributed. The Hunger Prevention Advisory Council will make recommendations for the use of those funds in the near future.



On December 12, Commissioner Harris and Buddy the Foster Care Bear joined with Governor McGreevey to thank people who have helped children in foster care this year, at the 4th Annual Foster Children's Day event. See page 4 for the full story.

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Letter From the Commissioner

I write this with a heavy heart, because it will be my last letter in the DHS News. I will be leaving the Department of Human Services by mid-February to assume a position at Rutgers University. The decision to leave was a difficult one, but I have always dreamed of working in academia, and I felt I could not let this opportunity pass me by.

Despite my sadness, I leave with the confidence that the Department is in good hands. Governor McGreevey has selected Jim Davy, who is now Chief of Management and Operations in the Office of the Governor, to be my successor. I've worked closely with Jim Davy for the last two years, and I've come to know him as an intelligent, capable person who cares about the people served by this department. I'm sure he will meet the chal-

lenge of transforming the child welfare system and protecting services for New Jersey's vulnerable and needy people in these difficult financial times. I wish him well.

Although my tenure here has been filled with many challenges, particularly in regards to the problems of our child welfare system, I feel very happy about all that we have accomplished. Many of these accomplishments are reflected in this issue of the DHS News.

One of the stories in this issue, for example, talks about the great strides we are making toward real contract reform. The goal is to do a much more efficient and creative job of managing the more than 3,000 third party social service contracts that different divisions within DHS have with approximately 1,600 providers. In FY 2005, we anticipate that the Department will spend more than \$1.8 billion on these contracts.

Another story in this issue relays the good news that all eligible large DHS institutions are now certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This issue also includes stories about the final design plans for the new Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital, which is administered through the Division of Mental Health Services, and a \$2.2 million Workforce Investment Act grant awarded by the New Jersey Department of Labor to the New Jersey Youth Corps. The Youth Corps is administered by the Office of Education.

These stories, and others in this issue, are a tribute to the hard work done by the people who work for the Department of Human Services. It has been an honor to work with you, and I will always value the experiences we shared, serving the most vulnerable people of New Jersey.

Gwendolyn L. Harris

Harris Honors Parents for Designing Program for People with Disabilities

A group of parents who helped design a new program that will provide many more services for approximately 18,000 people with disabilities who live at home with their families was honored in September by Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris.

The parents worked closely with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to develop *Real Life Choices*, a

program intended to provide new kinds of assistance to people who live at home while they are on the DDD waiting list for placement in a community living situation, such as a group home.

"Many family members have been advocating for options other than group homes, and they came to the table with excellent ideas," said Commissioner Harris. "They have done a remarkable job of fine-tuning this new service option."

The parents who received certificates of recognition were: Ellie Byra, of Flemington; Eileen Coyne, of

Brick; Debbie Flanagan of Egg Harbor City; Gail Frizzell of Branchville; Marilyn Kuna of Somerset; Mary Knuer of Farmingdale; Regina Tegler of Bridgewater; Natalie Trump of Brick; Monique Wilson of Freehold; Lorraine D'Sylva Lee of Changewater; and Walter Fernandez of Barnegat.



Front: Ellie Byra, Eileen Coyne, Marilyn Kuna; Middle: Debbie Flanagan, Natalie Trump, Commissioner Harris, Monique Wilson, Mary Kneur, Division Director Jim Smith, Deputy Commissioner Terri Wilson; Back: Gail Frizzell

Atlantic and Cape May Counties and will be phased in throughout the rest of the state this spring. People who participate in the program must be eligible for Medicaid.

Through *Real Life Choices*, families can receive many different types of services including those that provide devices to assist individuals with speech, lifting and mobility and personal care or respite care to give family caregivers a break. Other programs provide teach personal or employment skills during the day.

DHS Facilities Federally Certified

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has certified all eligible large DHS institutions, demonstrating that the seven state developmental centers and five state psychiatric hospitals

meet federal standards for quality care, treatment and safety and allow the facilities to receive federal funding.

Most of the institutions needed only minor improvements in order to maintain their certification. However, the New Lisbon and Woodbridge developmental centers, which were temporarily denied CMS certification over the past few years due to concerns about staffing levels, training and physical problems at the facilities, required major improvements. Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris credited Governor McGreevey for providing the funds necessary for making these improvements. "With the support of our employees, we were able to bring all of these facilities up to the level of care that we want and need to provide to our clients," she said.

Both the developmental centers and the psychiatric hospitals are certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). In addition, the hospitals also are accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). The developmental centers provide care to more than 3,000 people with developmental disabilities and the state psychiatric hospitals provide treatment to approximately 2,200 adults.

Receiving this certification for FY03 allows the state to continue to receive approximately \$220 million in federal Medicaid funding for the developmental centers and \$16 million for the psychiatric hospitals. New Jersey was also able to claim approximately \$152 million in FY03 through the federal Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) reimbursements.

Commissioner Harris Receives Leadership NJ Award

Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris, a graduate of Leadership New Jersey's (LNJ) Class of 1988, was honored by her peers with this year's LNJ Professional Development Award at the annual Awards Celebration of the Leadership New Jersey Graduate Organization (LNJGO), held in New Brunswick on December 2, 2003. This was LNJGO's 13th awards ceremony, which traditionally follows the final seminar and graduation of the current LNJ class and introduction of next year's class.

The LNJ award is the second major honor for Commissioner Harris within the past six weeks. At the end of October, she received the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year Award from the University of Connecticut, the top alumni award given at UConn.

Leadership NJ, which is a project of Partnership for New Jersey -- based out of New Brunswick -- seeks out men and women statewide with successful professional lives who at the same time are engaged in their community as civic leaders. It recognizes them for their accomplishments, informs them about the key issues shaping the future of the state, and challenges them to take on wider responsibilities to make New Jersey a better place in which to live and work. The year-long seminar program is just the beginning of the Leadership New Jersey experience. Fellows remain active in the graduate network and can take part in projects and activities that reflect the goals of the program. Governor James E. McGreevey was a member of the first LNJ Class in 1987, and Commissioner Harris was a member of the second LNJ Class in 1988. Each Class consists of 50 Fellows chosen from a very competitive field of state leaders.

Miles of Mules

He was lifeless yet lively at the same time - a fiberglass mule decked out in a swirl of vibrant colors and exotic shapes, with a jeweled crown and strings of beads hanging rakishly from his right ear.

A mule worthy of a Mardi Gras strut down Bourbon Street, one might say. Instead, he spent much of this year greeting visitors to the Lambertville Station, a popular restaurant and pub in Lambertville at the foot of the New Hope Bridge.

The festive mule, created by patients at the Ann Klein Forensic Center, was one of more than 150 similar sculptures displayed throughout the Delaware Valley as part of the Miles of Mules public art project.

The Ann Klein Forensic Center Board of Trustees appropriated \$2,000 to sponsor the patients’ mule, said the hospital’s Deputy CEO Gerry Kirwan.

Then, art therapists Susanne Pitak Davis and Carol Pletnick recruited patients to help design and decorate the mule.

“This was a great project for the patients,” Ms. Davis said. “The mule was on display all through the summer and into October. Obviously, they couldn’t go see it, but their families and friends could. The patients were really proud of it.”

The multicolored mule, which was returned to Ann Klein Forensic Center in early November, will be refurbished and displayed in the hospital, Ms. Davis said.



She said she hopes the mule will be on display before the end of the year - when Kirwan will retire - because he was integral in getting the project approved.

While the Ann Klein Forensic Center kept its mule, many of those that were on display will be auctioned off to benefit the James A. Michener Art Museum of Bucks County, Pa.

The Miles of Mules project itself was a fundraiser for the museum and various other nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies, including the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and State Heritage Park.

Sponsors paid up to \$10,000 to uniquely decorate one of the fiberglass, life-sized mules and then have them displayed in the cities and towns lining the Delaware and Lehigh canals.

Most of the mules were placed in Pennsylvania, but a few were on display in New Jersey towns such as Frenchtown and Lambertville.

Ms. Davis said it was not a new idea to use representations of animals for a community art project. Zurich, Switzerland, began the trend several years ago with a display of cow sculptures, she said.

Chicago also hosted a “Cow Parade” in recent years to celebrate the history of its meatpacking industry, Ms. Davis said. In Burlington County, Mount Holly currently has a display of monkeys, she said.

Mules were chosen for the Delaware and Lehigh canals because the animals played a key role in the region’s history, towing boatloads of coal along the canals to industrial centers in Philadelphia and New York.

Greystone Final Design

The Department of Human Services will proceed with plans for a new Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital that is smaller than the current hospital yet is slightly larger than the one originally proposed.

The final design - being developed by project architects The Vitetta Group - will feature a 400-bed hospital that is entirely self-contained, integrating administrative offices and the patients’ residential, treatment and program areas under a single roof. Ten cottages on the current Greystone campus will be maintained as part of the hospital, providing another 60 beds for patients who need less intensive treatment and security.

The original plan proposed a total 410 beds, but DHS officials increased that to 460 in response to input from mental health advocates. The new building will also be designed to accommodate a future 50-bed expansion, if needed.

Gov. James E. McGreevey, who announced the Greystone plan late last month, said the new hospital will be flexible, compact and efficient, allowing the state to serve its clients well for many decades.

“We are keeping the promises we made to people with mental illness,” Gov. McGreevey said. “Despite dire economic times, we must care for the most vulnerable among us.”

DHS Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris said the 50 beds were added in response to public comments on the



Greystone circa 1955

plan to ensure that Greystone can handle any unforeseen increases in patient census.

“That we are proceeding on this project despite the state’s financial condition is a testament to this administration’s commitment to serving people with mental illnesses,” added Commissioner Harris.

Preliminary estimates for the total cost of the Greystone project range from \$155 million to \$170 million.

The project is a three-way partnership between the DHS, the New Jersey Health Care Facilities Financing Authority (HCFFA), which will arrange the financing, and the state Economic Development Authority, which is providing construction design and management services.

Last month, the HCFFA board approved the issuance of up to \$25 million in bonds to complete the final design, demolish a former dormitory building, and reconstruct a public road to avoid the site of the new hospital.

Greystone, which first opened in 1876, currently houses about 550 patients in several buildings spread across a sprawling campus. The Department decided to replace Greystone because the inefficient layout and the aging buildings raised operating costs and made it difficult to properly treat and supervise patients.

The proposed new hospital is expected to accommodate fewer patients as additional community services are expanded statewide over the next two years as a result of the Redirection II plan.

Redirection II is a multi-year effort to increase community-based treatment and residential programs for patients who are capable of returning to their communities and to prevent unnecessary hospitalizations of people with mental illness who live in the community.

Despite the state’s fiscal crisis, Gov. McGreevey’s budget this year included a \$10 million funding increase for Redirection II.

Contract Reform Underway at DHS

The Department of Human Services is working to streamline the process of contracting with the community-based agencies that provide the majority of services to DHS clients.

The effort is being made through a Contract Reform Task Force, which was appointed by Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris. The day-to day work is being done by four subcommittees, or task forces, under the direction of a steering committee headed by Jacob Eapen, Assistant Commissioner, Budget, Finance, Administration, Real Estate and Information Technology.

“It is a very big challenge to take our current contracts and create a contracting system that is efficient and practical, but which also acknowledges the differences among our providers and the needs of our divisions,”

The task they have undertaken is challenging. In FY 2005, DHS anticipates it will spend more than \$1.8 billion to contract with approximately 1,600 community-based agency providers through more than 3,000 third-party social service contracts with approximately 1,600 providers. This includes more than 200 agencies that have contracts with more than one division or office.

Currently, these contracts are managed by 12 separate contracting offices located in different divisions and offices within the Department. The number and complexity of the contracts managed by these offices vary widely.

At the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, for example, contracting staff handle a total of 15 contracts while the Division of Youth and Family Services manages 1,100 contracts and 2,400 different programs. Other divisions that have contracting responsibilities include the Division of Developmental Disabilities (300 contracts); the Division of Family Development (914 contracts); the Office of Education (175 contracts); and the Division of Mental Health Services (191 contracts including 650 different programs). The Partnership for Children has 27 contracts covering 204 programs

Over the years, each of these offices has, to some extent, developed its own unique way of contracting for the specific services they require. This has created different contracting practices that, at times, can be frustrating both for contract office staff and for providers, especially those that do business with more than one division.

“I believe that by building on the longstanding partnerships that we have had with our providers, and through the hard work of the employees who work at the Department of Human Services, we will be able to reform the way in which we administer our contracts, and we will be able to do it well.”

“It is a very big challenge to take our current contracts and create a contracting system that is efficient and practical, but which also acknowledges the differences among our providers and the needs of our divisions,” said Commissioner Harris. “But I believe that by building on the longstanding partnerships that we have had with our providers, and through the hard work of the employees who work at the Department of Human Services, we will be able to reform the way in which we administer our contracts, and we will be able to do it well.”

Governor and Commissioner Harris Honor for Foster Children’s Day

TRENTON-Governor James E. McGreevey joined Department of Human Services Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris to honor community volunteers and organizations for helping New Jersey’s foster children during a ceremony on December 12th at the Trenton War Memorial, to celebrate New Jersey’s 4th Annual Foster Children’s Day.

“We are happy to honor these unselfish citizens whose love and kindness helps us in our efforts to keep New Jersey’s children safe,” said Governor McGreevey. “They have stepped up to help us secure safer and better futures for children in foster care, not just during these holidays, but every day of the year!”

Foster Children’s Day was established in 2000 to increase awareness of the needs of New Jersey’s over 8,400 foster children. Children may be placed in foster care when they cannot safely remain in their own home because of abuse or neglect. As of October, 2003, 5708 children live in unrelated foster care and 2719 children are living in relative care. Currently, 65 percent of foster children are siblings and half are under the age of five.

“While we honor our special guests today, we also want to remind New Jersey’s citizens not only to think about children in need during the holidays - with efforts like toy drives and food drives -- but also to open their hearts and homes to children who need love and nurturing all year long,” added Commissioner Harris.

This year’s theme of “Sweet Dreams” culminated a campaign drive that collected new books and new pajamas for children in foster care, some of which were on display. Also attending were Ed Cotton, Director of the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) and Buddy the Foster Care Bear [who handed out teddy bears and plaques with Governor McGreevey].

The Foster-Adopt family, Michelle and Bud Cannavono of Long Valley, that inspired Girl Scout Troop 151 to get involved with helping foster children, attended the ceremony with their one of their adopted daughters Rosie, and two-year-old Brandon who is due to be adopted by them in the near future. The Cannaveno’s have three of their own children, three adopted children, one foster child, plus soon-to-be-adopted Brandon. The Cannaveno’s work in close harmony

with DYFS, do foster parent training, are active foster parent recruiters, and have worked with Troop 151 over a number of years on charitable campaigns for foster children.

Individuals and organizations honored for their work on behalf of New Jersey’s foster children include:

- ✍ **Shannon and Kaity Hresko of Greenwich Township, Gloucester County** - 8th grade twins at Nehausny Middle School collected the teddy bears during April - Child Abuse Prevention Month - to benefit foster children.
- ✍ **Troop leader Vinita Ramsay, co-leader Starr Diethorn, and Girl Scout Troop 151 of Long Valley, Morris County** - Sarah Gail Banford, Michelle Margaret Bayman, Stephanie Beggin, Moriah Diethorn, Judy Morrell, Christine Morrison, Resham Ramsay, H. Victoria Sonderly, Corrin Wolf; and Aakash Ramsay from Boy Scout Troop 236 - established a foster care merit badge for girls to earn.
- ✍ **Reverend Sandra Bracket and Reverend Lawrence Forman of Lawnside, Camden County** - every year their Sunday School at Mt. Pisgah AME Church in Lawnside hosts a Christmas party for children in foster care.
- ✍ **Kathy Mercer of Pine Hill, and Dignity for Children (a group of women from Camden County)** - for the past three years they have sponsored a ballroom dance at the Starlight Ballroom in Pennsauken, courtesy of Joyce Handley, with the proceeds benefiting foster children.
- ✍ **Roy Greenblatt of Vineland, Cumberland County** - his Matt Blatt Car Dealership has provided a gift for every child in foster care in Cumberland County for the past five years.
- ✍ **Dr. Sunanda Gaur of North Brunswick**, who works at Robert Wood Johnson Medical Center in New Brunswick, Middlesex County - an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the NJ Statewide Family Centered HIV Care Network, Dr. Gaur participates in the DYFS Child Health Advisory Council and has assisted with the sub-committee looking at Medical Health Records.

To learn more about foster parenting, visit the DYFS foster care web site at <http://www.njfostercare.org> or call toll-free 1-877-NJ-FOSTER.

Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund Grants Awards

Hope and goodwill arrived just in time for the holiday season for some New Jersey families thanks to the Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund that provided financial assistance with the uncovered medical bills related to their child’s illness. The Commission, which oversees the fund, announced its most recent financial grant awards at a ceremony with several representative families in the Governor’s Outer Office at the State House on Thursday, December 18.

“The program makes it possible for families to focus upon the needs of their children without worrying about their ability to pay for necessary medical care. New Jersey is the only state in the union with such a program.”



Commissioner Harris introduces Governor James E. McGreevey at the annual holiday ceremony in the State House to announce the second half of the year's Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund awards to families.

“The Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund provides New Jersey families with needed financial support, yet does not use taxpayer dollars,” said Governor James E. McGreevey. “The program makes it possible for families to focus upon the needs of their children without worrying about their ability to pay for necessary medical care. New Jersey is the only state in the union with such a program.”

The fund is collected from an annual surcharge of \$1 per employee levied on all employers who are subject to the New Jersey Unemployment Compensation Law. In the most recent group of awards, families received grants ranging from \$1,833 to \$907,585.

“The fund is available when a child becomes ill and the cost of the medical care is catastrophic for that family. We are proud that this fund is available to help New Jersey families,” said Jane Lorber, Chairperson of the Commission.

This calendar year the commission has approved awards that exceed \$5 million to help 136 families pay the uncovered expenses associated with their child’s illness. The commission has approved over \$83 million in assistance to more than 3,400 families since it began making awards in December 1989. Families in every county in New Jersey have been assisted with extraordinary medical debts.

“The fund serves as a safety net for families,” said Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris. “The financial benefits of the fund allow families to maintain their family life while dealing with the care for a sick child and coping with mounting medical bills. The Department of Human Services is glad to work with the Commission and its outreach efforts to families.”

Woodbridge Employee Rescues Co-worker

WILLIAM THOMAS, a ten-year employee of the Woodbridge Developmental Center was thrust into the media limelight following his rescue on November 25th of a motorist from her car in the Rahway River. The woman turned out to be a fellow co-worker.

Thomas, whose story was told in newspapers, on radio and television, was barraged by media requests for personal interviews following his courageous act. “Mr. Thomas is uncomfortable with the notoriety, but his quick action and self-less concern for the other motorist have earned him enormous respect and admiration,” said Chief Executive Officer John Dougherty. “It is ironic that the other motorist was also one of our employees, Folashade Oyefeso and these two employees had not met before this incident.”



William Thomas is congratulated by CEO John Dougherty for his bravery in rescuing Folashade Oyefeso from the Rahway River.

Thomas jumped in and helped her to safety.

Oyefeso’s partially submerged car had been pushed into the river, after another car slammed into her vehicle. The 50 degree water, rising tide and the shock of the incident for Oyefeso, made the rescue difficult for Thomas. Oyefeso credits Thomas for saving her life.

Thomas joined the housekeeping staff at Woodbridge in July 1993 and Oyefeso has been a nurse’s aide since July 2001. Woodbridge Developmental Center, located in Woodbridge, is a residential center for more than 490 adults with developmental disabilities.

The incident began just after 7 a.m., when Thomas was driving to work with his wife, Jamelia, and two of their children in the car. Thomas saw a group of people along the rivers edge on East Hazelwood Avenue in Rahway and stopped the car. He observed a woman struggling in the water and concerned about the length of time she may have been in the water,

Busy Youth Corps Awarded \$2.2 million Workforce Investment Act Grant

New Jersey Youth Corps programs administered through the Office of Education have earned recognition on a number of different fronts in recent months.

Recently, for example, the New Jersey Department of Labor awarded the Youth Corps a \$2.2 million Workforce Investment Act grant to help fund new programs for young people seeking employment. These new training programs will help young people obtain the skills necessary for an entry level position as an arboriculture or Brownfields technicians and provide drivers' education training. The funding will also help pay for job coaches, mentors and staff development activities.

Youth Corps members also received praise from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for their help in restoring a long-abandoned camp for the blind, located on Barnegat Bay in Waretown, Ocean County. The camp had been acquired by the Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education, and Youth Corps members trimmed bushes, built trails, cut the grass and did general clean up and maintenance around the camp.

"This works well with their 'green industry' training in landscaping and tree trimming, and it gives them camp training," said Art Davenport, Director of the Youth Corps' Southern Region. "Eventually, when the old cabins and indoor pool are connected to the well for running water, our Youth Corps will be able to use the scenic facility for training and overnight retreats, which is quite a contrast from their city environment."

Youth Corps members were also recognized in October by New Jersey Secretary of State Regena L. Thomas, who invited its members to take part in ceremonies honoring African American history. The ceremony, called the Rites of Ancestral Return, involved moving the remains of Colonial era African slaves from Washington D.C. to New York City. The remains had been under study in Washington since 1991, when they were unearthed during a construction project in lower Manhattan.

When the remains passed through New Jersey and made stops at Jersey City, Phillipsburg, Newark and Trenton, 107 Youth Corps members and 21 staff

members formed an Honor Guard and funeral procession.. The remains, which represent more than 20,000 slaves buried in Manhattan, were re-interred on Oct. 4 at the African Burial Ground.



New Jersey Youth Corps Newark members and staff pause in front of the African Burial Ground Memorial Site in Manhattan. They were part of the Honor Guard escorting the remains of 419 persons, from Washington D.C., through New Jersey, to New York City, for the Rites of Ancestral Return, which represented over 20,000 slaves thought to have been buried there long ago in Manhattan.

Finally, on Oct. 5, 30 Youth Corps members helped honor civil rights leader Fannie Lou Hamer, who as head of the black Mississippi delegation to the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, fought to get black delegates seated. The Corps members took

part in ceremonies in Atlantic City, where they played drums, sang and helped lead a walk to lay a wreath at the Civil Rights Garden on Martin Luther King Boulevard.

DHS Embraces First Hispanic Heritage Celebration

The Department of Human Services (DHS) took to heart Governor James E. McGreevey's departmental directive to observe Hispanic

Heritage Month - the first time a sitting Governor has promoted such a widespread observance - and created activities and events statewide. The highlight of the department's activity was its Inaugural Hispanic Heritage Arts and Culture reception at Central Office in Trenton, hosted by Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris, on October 7, 2003. It featured flamenco dancers, music, poetry and an art exhibition.

Other DHS divisions also sponsored events to observe the month. The Division of Mental Health Services set up a multi cultural booth at Ancora Hospital, and Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital held an Oktoberfest, which included a meal and a performing group. A dance featuring Latino artists was sponsored by the Ann Klein Forensic Center, and a luncheon took place at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital for employees and patients. The Division of Developmental Disabilities held an afternoon

"Coming Together" event at its Trenton offices for staff to learn more about the Latino culture.



Flamenco dancers Takako Akaki of Doylestown and Sharron Bolen of Princeton entertain a standing-room-only crowd of DHS employees for the department's Hispanic Heritage Celebration.

The DHS events drew high praise from Axel Miranda, Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor McGreevy, who attended the event in Central Office. "When the charge came from the Governor that each Department please recognize Hispanic Heritage Month, the Department of Human Services not

only answered the call, but did so in a great way and continues to," he said.

National Hispanic Heritage Month spanned September 15 to October 15, 2003 to coincide with its precursor-Hispanic Heritage Week, which began nationally in 1698. Several Latin American countries celebrate their Independence days on September 15, including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua; Mexico celebrates its Independence on September 16, and Chile's Independence is September 18.

Paramedics trained to Spot Child Abuse

Following Human Service Commissioner Gwendolyn L. Harris' lead to improve community stakeholders' ability to spot and report child abuse, Dr. David Sharlin, the pediatric consultant who handles the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) cases in Mercer County, ran an intensive training session for Mercer County Paramedics on November 9th, on how to spot signs of child abuse.

Donating his time for the Sunday training session, Sharlin gave a slide and PowerPoint presentation to about 28 paramedics as part of a program sponsored by Capital Health System Emergency Medical Services. The program was a refresher class for National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians - Paramedic level. The class was held on the weekend of November 8 and 9 at the Union Titusville Fire and EMS



Dr. David Sharlin

Headquarters. The class presented by Dr. Sharlin was part of the national requirements for training paramedics... an 18-hour re-certification refresher course.

"His presentation, especially his color slides of injuries, provided valuable information for the recognition and treatment of children who have been abused. EMS is faced with this dilemma in the field and the statistics and injury patterns were eye-opening for the advanced responders" said Laurie Roe, assistant clinical coordinator for Capital Health Systems' Emergency Medical Services.

News in Brief

Commissioner Harris announced the appointment of **ANN C. KOHLER** as director of the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS). Ms.Kohler took over her new post on October 20, 2003. She had served with the state Office of Management and Budget since 2000. Prior to that she worked for the state Health Care Facilities Financing Authority, as Medicaid director for the state of New York. She held various posts in the New Jersey DMAHS between 1979 and 1994 including Deputy Director.



JEANETTE PAGE-HAWKINS has been appointed Director of the Division of Family Development (DFD). Page-Hawkins joined the division in December 2002 as deputy director and has served as the division’s acting since June 2003. In her career she has served as executive director, Newark Emergency Services for Families, Inc.;administrator, New Community Harmony House Corp. in Newark; district office manager, Children’s Aide and Adoption Society of New Jersey and as district office manager for the Division of Youth and Family Services in Plainfield.



Office of Education Earns Federal Technology - Distance Learning grant

The Office of Education was recently awarded \$720,375 through the Federal Universal Service Schools and

Libraries Program. The funds will support development of video conferencing/distance learning capabilities within each of the regional schools administered by the Office of Education. It also will pay for Wide Area Network through ATM circuits and reimbursement for local/long distance phone services.

“In essence, we will have schools without walls, enriching the educational experience of students through unlimited interactions with teachers, college professors, and other students,” said John Lewis, Director of the Office of Education. “This technology will also provide new avenues for staff development.”

NY Giants #55 Visits North Jersey Developmental Center

TOTOWA - DHANI JONES, linebacker #55 for the New York Football Giants, recently made a special appearance at the North Jersey Developmental Center to the delight of the Center’s clients, staff and surrounding community residents. Jones has been recognized locally and nationally with awards for his community involvement and most recently was the recipient of the Walter Payton Man of the Year award from the NFL.



Andrew Sarchio, Director of Human Resource, NJDC; Dhani Jones, #55, NYG; Bruce Werkheiser, CEO, NJDC; Ethan Medley, Community Unity Relations Liaison, NYG; Dolores Cattiny, Volunteer Services Coordinator/ Community Relations Liaison, NJDC.

DR. T. STEPHEN PATTERSON, Chief of Psychological Services for the Department of Human Services, received a Diplomate in Clinical Psychology from the American Board of Professional Psychology at the August meeting of the American Psychological Association in Toronto, Canada. The Diplomate is given for high achievement and professional contributions in psychology and is recognized as the most prestigious credential in the field.

Forums Educate Employers about Benefits of Hiring People with Disabilities

About 150 people representing non-profit organizations, state agencies and private businesses attended three regional forums this fall hosted by the Division of Disability Services. The theme of the forums was “People with Disabilities, The Untapped Resource,” and the goal was to help educate employers about the value of employing people with disabilities. The forums were funded through a four-year federal grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Awards Given for Work on Behalf of Adoptive Children

A select group of staff members, adoptive families and community agencies was honored at a special awards luncheon by the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) for their work on behalf of adoptive children. The luncheon was held on Nov. 29 at the Lafayette Yard Marriott Hotel in Trenton and was co-sponsored by DYFS, the Association for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) and the Adoption Services Advisory Committee.

The honorees included eight staff members, 12 adoptive families, and seven community agencies and individuals. In addition, during the ceremony, Acting Deputy Commissioner of DYFS Eileen Crummy, of Cranford, received the Congressional “Angel in Adoption” Award for her work in adoption.

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